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AIDS MORTALITY IN NORTH CAROLINA, 1988-92

by

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ABSTRACT

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) has emerged as a leading cause of death for young adults in the United States. A detailed examination of AIDS mortality in North Carolina has not previously been published. In this report, sociodemographic patterns of AIDS mortality in North Carolina were investigated for the 5-year period 1988-1992.

Young adults aged 25-44 accounted for 78 percent of AIDS deaths in North Carolina during the study period. AIDS mortality rates were higher among men than women, and much higher among blacks compared to whites. AIDS mortality increased rapidly among adults aged 25-44 during the 5-year study period, becoming the leading cause of death among black men, the second leading cause of death among black women, and the fourth leading cause of death among white men by 1992. AIDS mortality was associated with a higher social class position (white collar employment and college education) among young black men and white men, but not among young black women. Geographically, the highest AIDS mortality rates were found in the eastern region of the state, while the greatest number of AIDS deaths were concentrated in North Carolina's largest cities.

AIDS has afflicted North Carolinians of all ages, races, and social class positions, although young black men have suffered the highest mortality from AIDS. AIDS deaths have occurred to residents of almost all of North Carolina's 100 counties. While state AIDS mortality rates are still below the national average, the findings of this study emphasize that AIDS is a growing public health problem in North Carolina.

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